

Winter Wear

The ads are all full of the virtues of polypropylene. Is it that great? Should you buy it? Our equipment researcher, Dr. Stephen Paul of Temple University, after two years of testing, reports that under laboratory conditions, polypropylene is indeed a fine invention, wicking moisture through it and hence away from the body, but the real test comes when you go outdoors to run. If you read the ads carefully, you will find that polypro is meant to be worn under another garment. The reason is that polypropylene—a synthetic fabric—is no heavier than a lightweight nylon, and like nylon, cannot work alone to keep heat next to the body, a thing we all prefer when the weather is cold.

There is, however, a product which has the capacity both to wick away moisture and retain body temperature. Tried by time and supplied by nature, lightweight and washable, it is wool which gets the gold star in the array of foul weather gear available to runners. It is made of little fibers which trap between them air heated by the body, and this layer of air, lighter than any clothing, acts as an additional buffer to sleet



A few days after the '83 NYC Marathon Fred Lebow, winners Rod Dixon and Grete Waltz, and John Paul Cruz, who finished the race on crutches, met with President Reagan at the White House. Mr. Reagan (above) holds an '84 marathon training shirt.

and snow. Wool pants, tights, shirts and shorts are available in many running shops, not to mention the hats, gloves

and underwear available everywhere else.

GORTEX

Gortex is another—rather costly—invention which has been getting a lot of press. Gortex is actually a film, not a fabric, of Dupont Teflon which is bonded to a fabric—usually nylon—just as Teflon is bonded to an aluminum skillet. Consisting of nine million pores per square inch, Gortex allows water vapor to pass through it, but holds back water droplets. Hence, it works very well on a runner's sweat-suit—letting out the heat and deflecting the sleet. The film is as strong as the fabric to which it is bonded and, if properly cared for and kept clean, a Gortex suit is a useful and lasting investment. Should it be left soiled, however, the coating is likely to develop fine breaks which will cause it to lose its effectiveness. All manufacturers of Gortex gloves and suits send their fabric to the inventor of the film for lamination.

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A Night To Remember

by MICHAEL CHACOUR

Sao Silvestre has been a New Year's

